



Cumbria at War 1939 - 1945

A Role Play Exercise in seven chapters, for use in secondary schools

Chapter 5

Away from Home

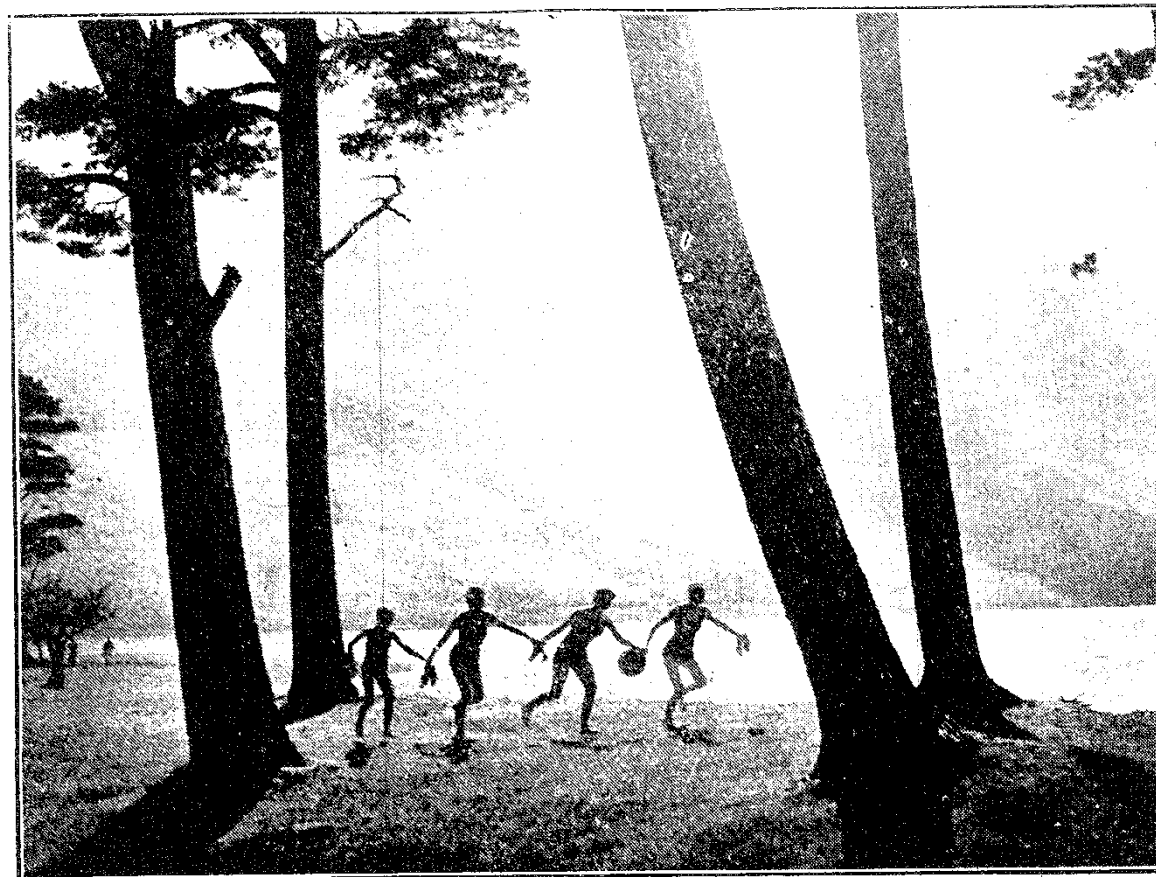
Evacuation, refugees and separated families.

© Cumbria Archive Service

A Cumbria Archive Service learning resource for secondary schools,
created by Guy Woolnough September 2009, modified for web April 2011

THE WHITEHAVEN NEWS, THURSDAY, JULY 25, 1940

ALLEGRO



East Coast evacuees enjoy a run on the shore of Buttermere after a bathe. A recent picture.

Air raids presented a serious danger to everyone in England, but Cumbria was one of England's safer counties. So large numbers of children and schools were evacuated to Cumbria.

Form EV. IV. 1

Month and Year Evacuation Completed **EVACUATION ROLL** **Name of School** *Heaton School*

Evacuating at *Heaton* Station on *2nd July 1939* H.M. at *12 o'clock* Arriving at *Carlisle*

Reception Area *County: NORTH-UMBRIA* Authority *HEATON* Village or *Heaton*

Group *2*

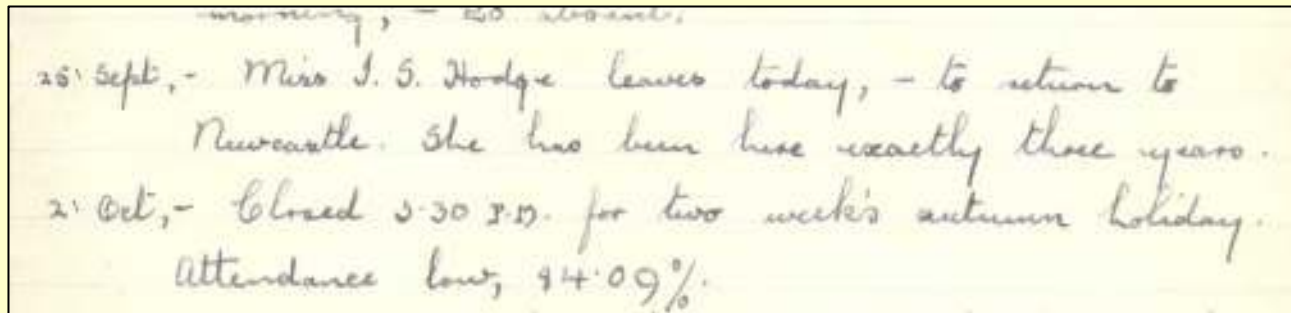
Surname	Christian Name	Sex	Date			Newcastle Address	Address of 1939	Special Medical Notes (From Registration Card)
			Day	Month	Year			
<i>Carter</i>	<i>John</i>					<i>45, Hill St.</i>		
<i>Bell</i>	<i>John Lawrence</i>	M	1	5	27	<i>197, (ANGL) STREET</i>	<i>Miss Smith - St. Helen's St.</i>	A
<i>Bell</i>	<i>Mary</i>	F	20	12	28			B <i>1939</i>
<i>Bell</i>	<i>Margaret</i>	F	26	2	31			A B
<i>Bell</i>	<i>Hannah</i>	F	5	5	23			B <i>1939</i>
<i>Riggall</i>	<i>John</i>	F	18	11	28	<i>18, Dorset Road</i>	<i>To Mrs. Riggall, 18, Dorset Road</i>	
<i>Riggall</i>	<i>John</i>	M	6	1	31		<i>Mr. & Mrs. The Kennels</i>	A
<i>Bowman</i>	<i>John</i>	M	10	11	33	<i>225, Ruby Street</i>	<i>18, Dorset Road</i>	A
<i>Bryson</i>	<i>Arthur</i>	M	12	6	28	<i>43, Hill St.</i>		A <i>first year, class</i>
<i>Bryson</i>	<i>Douglas</i>	M	13	6	28	<i>30, Tilt Street</i>	<i>St. Helen's St.</i>	A
<i>Carter</i>	<i>Isabella</i>	F	23	4	27	<i>11, Manchester Rd.</i>		A
<i>Carter</i>	<i>John</i>	M	28	5	31			A
<i>Carter</i>	<i>William</i>	M	11	9	32			A <i>1939</i>
<i>Coxon</i>	<i>Elizabeth</i>	F	17	2	30	<i>113, Apton Street</i>	<i>Miss Linton - Market St.</i>	A
<i>Coxon</i>	<i>Elizabeth</i>	F	21	4	33		<i>Miss Linton - Market St.</i>	A <i>1939</i>
<i>Chapman</i>	<i>Miriam</i>	F	21	12	30	<i>6, Rutland Rd.</i>	<i>Miss. Kirkbride, Gillingham</i>	A
			Totals			<i>12</i>		
			Vol. Index					

INSTRUCTIONS.—This is a record card and various paper attached. Prepare roll from record cards. On day of evacuation fill particulars of evacuees not already recorded. Then each page printed as above as an index register. Ferry leader should then collate the several sheets and place each set in a separate file. Give top copy to Billing Officer. Retain others till filled, then send one set to Division of Education, Newcastle. **R.E.**—The original, under R.E. P. (Pensions), J. (Jury), etc. Transmitter made on pupils' experience card by Medical Officer (mark H or G) should be retained in his office or his home and shown to the Billing authorities.

The first wave of evacuation was in 1939, followed by a second wave when the air raids began in earnest in 1940.

But by 1944, the risk of air raids had gone, and most evacuees and their teachers had gone back to the cities.

This is the head-teacher's entry in the school log book for Gosforth School, recording in 1942 the departure of the teacher who had come with the evacuees.



25th Sept, - Miss J. S. Hodge leaves today, - to return to Newcastle. She has been here exactly three years.
2nd Oct, - Closed 5.30 P.M. for two week's autumn holiday.
Attendance low, 94.09%.

Then, in June 1944, Hitler launched the first of his “Vengeance” weapons, the V1. These were aimed at London, and it was very difficult to stop them, or to protect people with shelters. Another wave of evacuees soon came to Cumbria. The school registers show them as new pupils.

The V1 raids on London petered out in the autumn, and the evacuees drifted back to London again.

Dean Gibson School, Kendal. The admission register shows evacuees starting in August 1944, the start of the new school year, but most of them left again within a month.

Date of admission	Name	Age	Last school attended	Left Kendal	Cause of Leaving
August 1944	Michael Popplewell	3	Vauxhall, London	21st December 1944	Returned home
August 1944	Donald Davis	9	London	29th September 1944	Returned home
August 1944	Derek Davis	7	London	29th September 1944	Returned home
August 1944	Terence Davis	5	London	29th September 1944	Returned home
August 1944	Pamela Madger	13	New Maldon, SW London	29th September 1944	Returned home
August 1944	Jean Madger	6	New Maldon	29th September 1944	Returned home
August 1944	Carol Hare	7	New Maldon	29th September 1944	Returned home
August 1944	David Gamble	7	Upper Norwood, London	7th June 1945	Returned home
August 1944	John Stalker	7	Upper Norwood,	8th September 1944	Returned home
August 1944	Kathleen Read	12	Sidcup, Kent	18th April 1945	Returned home
August 1944	David Read	7	Sidcup, Kent	18th April 1945	Returned home

SPECIALIST BREEDERS OF HIGH-CLASS PEDIGREE UTILITY STOCK.
STAMINA AND SUPER-GRADE EGGS.

White Leghorns
Rhode Island Reds
Light Sussex

and
W. H. & V. M. LOWES

THE TOWERS,

COCKERMOUTH, CUMBERLAND.

Station:
Cockermouth,
L.M.S.

Hatching Eggs and
Day-old Chicks
in season.

Pedigree Day-old
Cockerels

8-week-old Pullets
a speciality.

July 13th 1944

The Chief Billeting Officer,
Town Hall,
Cockermouth.

Dear Sir,
I am in receipt of your notice re the billeting of two
evacuees.

I am not in a position to accept these and would like you
to place my case before the Appeal Committee.
Firstly I have four bedrooms. I already have here an expectant
mother and child (3½ yrs.) who have no other home having been
bombed out in Bath. They are neither friends or relatives of mine,
and the husband is in the Navy. At the request of a friend of mine
I took them in and gave them a home. I also keep permanently two
Land Army girls, who must each have a room to comply with
regulations. For myself I am out of the house all day from 8 a.m.
to 6 p.m. working on the Fars, which is classed as work of National
importance. This is an Accredited Breeding Farm under the Ministry
of Agriculture, and no matter what the labour difficulties or
other handicaps a certain standard of efficiency and cleanliness
must be maintained.

Frankly I have more work than I can possibly cope with
both indoors and out and I feel you will understand my position.
In carrying on under great difficulties and providing a home for
mother and child I trust you will consider I am already doing my
duty. I may also add that for the first two years of the war I
had evacuees continuously.

Yours Faithfully,

V. M. Lowes

Cumbria was
getting crowded.

People were finding
it difficult to help.

Here Mrs Lowes is
telling the Billeting
Officer that she is
already doing more
than her fair share.

Was Cumbria a Place of Safety for Evacuees?

The experiences of Howard Temperley, evacuated to Yanwath, near Penrith

The original idea was to send me to Canada, but the ship on which I was to have travelled, the City of Benares, was sunk. My parents, therefore, decided to send me to Penrith, in the Lake District, instead.

The Newcastle Royal Grammar School had moved there at the outbreak of war. . . .
. . I joined it in September 1941, having become, in effect, a boarding school
Terrible bullying went on, mostly among the 11-to -13-year-olds. As I have since observed with flocks of birds, those picked on were the weak and timorous. By way of proving that I was neither I performed acts of lunatic bravery, climbing trees and jumping out of windows.

Being in magnificent country and on the edge of what was then a vast military training ground, this opened up all kinds of new possibilities. Sentries guarded the roads, but cutting across the fields we found we could wander pretty much at will through a landscape scarred by tank tracks and careered over by armoured cars. The soldiers we encountered didn't seem to mind. Later on there were Americans who gave us sweets and chewing gum, occasionally cigarettes.

Continued on next page

Older boys had homework; we younger ones did not, or if we did I can't recall spending any time on it. Ill prepared though I was in other respects, I did know how to snare and gut rabbits, my father, originally a country boy, having taught me. My first effort, to judge by the missing peg and circle of trampled ground, had snared a cow. I expected terrible repercussions but nothing happened. After that I had more luck, selling my catch at half-a-crown each in Penrith market. With the proceeds I bought gin traps. Tucker Anderson (*the Head Teacher?*) caught me with my first and confiscated it; after that I was careful not to bring them anywhere near Hazelbank.

In time two other boys, both somewhat older than me, Rex Tate and Fungus Young, joined in and together we went off on bushwacking expeditions, finding young woodpigeons, which we plucked and gave to the woman at the pub to cook for us, and hedgehogs which we sought (unsuccessfully) to cook Gipsy-fashion wrapped in clay. On one such expedition a rabbit in a trap alerted us to the fact that another trapper was at work. We took not only the rabbit but as many of his traps as we could carry.

Continued on next page

Although this is the experience of just one evacuee, it does serve to remind us that the war was a great opportunity for young people who didn't want to obey the rules. The police, teachers and adults in general were far too busy to worry too much about what the youngsters were up to.

Of classroom instruction I have only the haziest of memories. Although I spent five days a week in class my mind was mostly elsewhere. The centre of my life the countryside, which I had come to regard as one vast adventure playground. And adventures there were in plenty, as on the day an ammunition lorry blew up scattering shells in all directions. I managed to retrieve one, which we spent hours trying to take apart. Eventually we gave up and buried it in Hazelbank grounds, where presumably it still is.

What we got away with still astonishes me. Tucker Anderson had a good idea of what was going on, but being in charge of billeting the entire school he already had more than enough on his plate.

And so we enjoyed a kind of anarchic freedom which, were it to happen nowadays, would soon have the police and welfare services calling. But in wartime the authorities had better things to do than worry about our petty delinquencies.

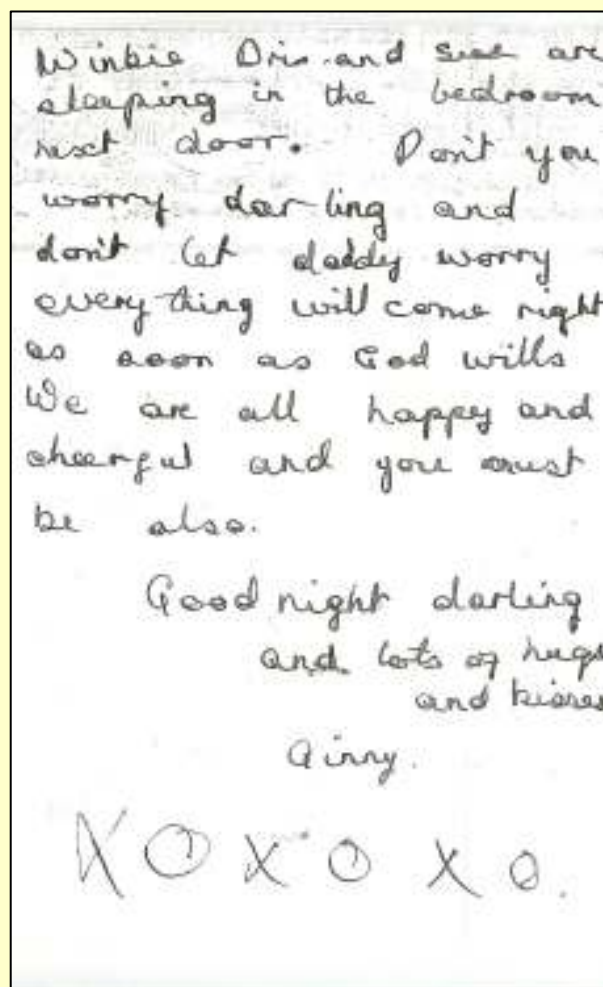
True, I never learned my tables, and cannot to this day readily tell you the sum of 8×9 . But what I got was an education of quite a different sort. Partly it was a confidence that came from having survived; partly it was a matter of learning about human potentialities; and partly it was the sheer magic of being allowed to run wild in a way Wordsworth would have appreciated and which I daresay few were allowed even back in his day.



Here is a letter from Ginny Wood to her parents Christina and Alexander.

Keeping in touch

There were not many phones in the 1940's, and the cost of a call was high, so most people kept in touch by letter.



For many families, letters were the only contact between children and parents for months or even years.



It wasn't only evacuation that split up families. Many men who were fathers were sent overseas to fight. Letters were often slow to arrive. You can see how long this one took, even though it was sent by air mail.

Dr Robert Rutherford was a GP in Longtown, but joined the Royal Army Medical Corps. He served in Egypt, Palestine, India, France and Belgium and was away for most of the war. He wrote to his wife and children several times a week.

FROM COLONEL R. RUTHERFORD - JAN 2ND 42.
 COMMANDING 60TH GENL HOSP
 BASE DEPOT POST OFFICE, BOMBAY.

MY DARLING BRIDGET.

THIS IS TO WISH YOU A VERY HAPPY BIRTHDAY AND I ONLY WISH I WAS AT HOME TO BLOW ALL THOSE TEN CANDLES OUT YOU MAKE ME FEEL AS OLD AS METHUSALEM THE WAY YOU ARE GROWING UP. YOU BET I'LL SEE TO IT THAT I'M HOME BEFORE YOU ARE ANOTHER YEAR OLDER. I MET THE TALL RED HEADED MULHULL AND THAT GAVE YOU RIDING LESSONS. A BIG HUG AND A BIG KISS AND I'M SINGING "HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU" LOTS OF LOVE FROM DADDY XXXXX

The Danish Fishing Fleet

REGISTER OF APPROVED

Name of Vessel	Name of Master	Date of Departure	Destination	Name of Owner	Remarks
1. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
2. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
3. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
4. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
5. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
6. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
7. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
8. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
9. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
10. H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	1.1.1940	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.

AND SAILINGS. FISHING VESSELS.

Name	No.	Name of Master	Date of Departure
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.
H. H. H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.	H. H. H.

It wasn't only school children who came to Cumbria for safety in the war. Many people escaped from Europe when the Nazis marched in. One group who came to Cumbria for the duration of the war was the Danish fishing fleet. They sailed to Whitehaven after Denmark was invaded in April 1940. For the rest of the war, they operated out of Whitehaven, to help in the defeat of the Nazis by feeding Britain.

You can see in this register that the names of many of the masters of these ships are Danish. The ships are also shown as owned by the MOWT, which was the Ministry of War Transport, in London. The real owners were still in Denmark, under Nazi control

Cumbria at War, 1939-1945

A Role Play Exercise in seven chapters for use in secondary schools.

Chapters:

1. Introduction: VE Day, Cumbria, May 1945.
2. In Uniform: those who served in uniform in Cumbria.
3. Working: those who worked in Cumbria to help win the war.
4. Home Supplies: how Cumbrians got what they needed in the war.
5. Away from Home: evacuees, and Cumbrians serving overseas.
6. Missing Home: prisoners of war, Cumbrians and Germans in Cumbria.
7. Not Coming Home: remembering those Cumbrians who fell in the war.